

'Eagle Eyes' campaign fights terrorism

Department of Defense U.S. Marine Corps News MARINE CORPS BASE QUANTICO, Va (Oct. 21, 2004) -- A new security awareness campaign, Eagle Eyes, was launched recently in an effort to help raise base and community situation awareness and to better inform the public of key roles it can take in the fight against terrorism.

Quantico Security Bn. And Naval Criminal Investigative Services have teamed up during the anti-terrorism campaign to help motivate the entire community to become more vigilant in reporting suspicious incidents, behaviors and anomalies by contacting the Eagle Eyes hotline at (703) 784-2252.

"The Eagle Eyes campaign was born of the necessity to expose the entire [Quantico] community to the fact that they are part of this war on terrorism and let everyone know that we all have a duty to be aware and to report suspicious activity," said James Tackett, special agent in charge of the campaign for NCIS. "The idea is to get the Eagle Eyes message out by whatever means necessary."

Currently, one of the primary sources helping to spread the campaign's message is through scenario-type articles published in the Sentry, said Tackett. The published scenarios are based on actual reported events.

The intent for using scenario-type articles is to gain the readers' full attention by getting them personally involved in the situation, ultimately leaving them with the question: "What would I do?" added Gunnery Sgt. Cindy Whetzel, Security Bn., criminal intelligence chief.

Other key methods providing the public with security information include security banners, located at the base entrances, and brochures available at the commissary and exchange.

The campaign, which is scheduled to intensify through the elections and continue for as long as threats are perceived and reported, stresses the awareness of vulnerabilities not only during working hours, but also during leisure time. It also emphasizes the importance of remembering to report suspicious incidents in a timely manner.

"Expanding situational awareness into our leisure time creates a situation where the information provided may give us more time to deal with possible threats," said Tackett. "Greater awareness of possible threats provides Quantico commanders, Security Bn., NCIS and local law enforcement more flexibility to anticipate and deal with imminent threats."

"The Eagle Eyes campaign is unique in that it is also intended to draw in the dependent and civilian employee populations as additional eyes and ears regardless of age or location, whether on base or in the local community," said Whetzel, who emphasized that the public should not analyze any situation and leave investigation responsibilities up to proper authorities.

Although it does help reinforce the need for an enhanced and aggressive security operation, Tackett said, the increase in the threat level to Orange (High) by the Department of Homeland Security was not the primary reason for implementing the campaign.

"All of us at MCB Quantico whether military, civilian employee, or DoD dependent - young or old - have a role in combating terrorism and protecting each other from those who wish to do us harm," emphasized Tackett. "It might seem like the phrase We are in this together' is overused, but in reality nothing could be more true. We are each other's best set of Eagle Eyes."

To report any suspicious activities or for more information, contact the Eagle Eyes hotline at (703) 784-2252 or NCIS Quantico at (703) 784-2993.

Copyright 2004 Federal Information & News Dispatch, Inc.